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Commission on the Status of Women
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Agenda item 3
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

Azerbaijan, Georgia,* Tajikistan,* Turkey and Uzbekistan:* draft resolution

Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling, its resolutions 39/2 of 31 March 1995, 40/1 of 22 March 1996, 41/1 of 21 March 1997, 42/2 of 13 March 1998, 43/1 of 12 March 1999, 44/1 of 2 March 2000 and 45/1 of March 2001,

Recalling also the relevant provisions contained in the instruments of international humanitarian law relative to the protection of civilians, including women and children, in areas of armed conflict,

Taking into account the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/146 of 17 December 1979, which also recognizes that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person and that the taking of hostages is an offence of grave concern to the international community,

Welcoming the adoption of the Beijing Declaration[1] and Platform for Action[2] adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, including the provisions regarding violence against women and children, as well as the final outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled

* In accordance with rule 69 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[2] Ibid., annex II.

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"Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[3]

Recalling Commission on Human Rights resolution 2001/38 of 23 April 2001 on hostage-taking, adopted at the fifty-seventh session, of the Commission,[4]

Expressing grave concern at the continuation of armed conflicts in many regions throughout the world and the human suffering and humanitarian emergencies they have caused,

Emphasizing that all forms of violence in areas of armed conflict committed against the civilian population, including women and children, including capturing them as hostages, seriously contravene international humanitarian law, as set out in the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 for the protection of victims of war[5] and the Protocols additional thereto,[6]

Concerned that, despite the efforts of the international community, acts of hostage-taking in different forms and manifestations, inter alia, those committed by terrorists and armed groups, continue to take place and have even increased in many regions of the world,

Recognizing that hostage-taking calls for resolute, firm and concerted efforts on the part of the international community in order, in strict conformity with international human rights standards, to bring such abhorrent practices to an end,

Expressing its strong belief that the rapid and unconditional release of women and children taken hostage in areas of armed conflict will promote the implementation of the noble goals enshrined in the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action,

1. *Reaffirms* that hostage-taking, wherever and by whomsoever committed, is an illegal act aimed at the destruction of human rights and is, under any circumstances, unjustifiable, including as a means to promote and protect human rights;

2. *Condemns* violent acts in contravention of international humanitarian law against civilian women and children in areas of armed conflict, and calls for an effective response to such acts, including the immediate release of such women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts;

3. *Condemns also* torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, as well as rape, slavery, and trafficking in women and children for the removal of organs, which are the most grave consequences of hostage-taking;

4. *Strongly urges* all parties to armed conflicts to respect fully the norms of international humanitarian law in armed conflict and to take all necessary measures for the protection of civilian women and children not involved in hostilities and for their immediate release;

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[3] General Assembly resolution S-23/3, annex.

[4] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 3* (E/2001/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970-973.

[6] Ibid., vol. 1125, Nos. 17512 and 17513.

5. *Urges* all parties to armed conflicts to provide safe and unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance for these women and children;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General and all relevant international organizations to use their capabilities and efforts to facilitate the immediate release of civilian women and children involved in hostilities;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to prepare, taking into account the information provided by States and relevant international organizations, a report on the implementation of the present resolution for submission to the Commission on the Status of Women at is forty-seventh session;

8. *Decides* to consider the question at its forty-seventh session.